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SUBJ

Philippines: Enrile Criticizes Aquino's Insurgency Policy

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Manila MANILA STANDARD in English 6 Aug pp 1, 2 [tentative]

[Text] Former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile said communist rebels had set up a parallel government in the Philippines and a military drive against them was being hampered by President Aquino's concern for her own popularity.

"You cannot be popular in dealing with the insurgency problem," the former defense minister said in a television interview Tuesday night.

"If you're going to think of popularity you'll never be able to solve the insurgency problem."

In one of his strongest attacks on the woman who fired him from the government last year, Enrile said: "I think this cannot be denied by the Aquino government we have two governments in Philippines."

He said the other government organized by the National Democratic Front (NDF) had set up "political infrastructures all the way down to the village level," holding areas government troops could not penetrate.

"The police just leave (the areas) alone and the (rebels) are free to roam, collect taxes, and live with the people."

Enrile said the Aquino government was afraid of unleashing its full military might against the rebel for fear that it would be accused of violating human rights.

He warned that military coup threats to Aquino would continue

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if it suppressed demands by soldiers for reforms.

"If you are going to try to thwart it, control it, submerge it, it might overwhelm you in the end," he warned.

Enrile denied any involvement in coup plots, saying, "If I was involved they should have prosecuted me."

(endall) 6 aug ea [redacted] 06/1440z aug

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